

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, October 28, 1965 *WHD*

Page 1

We slept until 7:00. Lyndon said it was the best night he had had. And then we had breakfast together and got up and went for a walk -- just the two of us -- past the dam and on to the birthplace and the cemetery and the school where we crossed to the spot where Lynda and Luci were always picked up by the school bus going into Johnson City during our first years out here. And then back past the church almost to the entrance -- nearly three miles -- talking all the way about things we wanted to plant or repair or change around the Ranch. Never will a home be finished!

The Secret Service picked us up with a car, and we drove up past the cemetery to see the handsome new <sup>*brought*</sup> ~~red~~ iron gate Mr. <sup>*Wright*</sup> ~~Wygle~~ has made us to match the old one that I bought about 10 years ago.

And then back at the Ranch in time to meet Dick Myrick and Roy White. We spread Myrick's designs out on a table in the front yard with hot coffee beside us, and talked about grouping the red yucca so that it would lean over the fence and filling in the <sup>*Ceniza*</sup> ~~sanasa~~ with smaller <sup>*Ceniza*</sup> ~~sanasa~~, where to put a clump of sumac -- Fall color. It would be good against the old stone wall on the west side of the office. And admired the sidewalk made out of Sisterdale ripple limestone that used to lie along the shore of an inland sea ages ago.

And then in for lunch with Lyndon and A. W. and Jimilu and Jake and the staff -- my favorite hamburgers and beans.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, October 28, 1965

Page 2

Lyndon has gained a little bit at the Ranch, but it is still a magnificent achievement -- from about 226 on Labor Day to the bottom low of 191 -- probably now 194 or so. And I have come from a variable weight that sometimes reached 124 after a catfish dinner at the Winters to 116. It's hard, but every compliment is a brick in my wall of strength.

We talked about the Park in Johnson City. We have struck out -- A. W. has -- in getting the adjoining neighbor to cooperate in any way. So the Park is really a postage stamp.

We discussed the possibility of life using the same amount of development money in the pecan grove along the little creek on the property where the stone fort stands. We've just acquired it and do not have the deed in hand, but are almost sure there are difficulties. It is not as accessible as the little place in town. A street will be built through from the boyhood home straight on down into the pecan grove, but that may be six months or two years. The fort will be restored, and maybe the commissary and log house behind it acquired and restored. It could be an interesting complex of Texas ranch life history in the 1850's. But that is in the future. And life's commitment and money is in the present. They want something to show by next May. What is the wisest thing to do?

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, October 28, 1965

Page 3

Roy and Dick and A. W. and I rode into Johnson City and walked all through the pecan grove -- magnificent trees -- discovered a lovely cypress. The creek is a disappointing dump however, and the back yards of the stores and house, an uninviting prospect. And so we returned to the Ranch with no decision, but only a better understanding of the advantages and disadvantages.

And now the lure of days end was on us all. I said goodbye to Dick and Roy, and with Lyndon, choppered over to A. W.'s with some of the girls. And we drove to "3 Springs" over a road -- or rather a nonroad frequently -- that it was unbelievable that a Lincoln Continental could navigate. And finally arrived at the brink of a great bluff. Below us, the Pedernales winding, across a wide bed that was mostly a sandbar.

A. W. and Lyndon and I got out and sat out ~~and~~ on the rocks. On up the river on our right the sunset slowly faded through all the shades of red. It shows that winter is coming on. It's not the great splashy palate of a summer sunset.

Far below us to the left the river on the rapids made a steady, rhythmic noise. And Lyndon talked about how when he was a little boy they used to come on picnics to the swimming hole right under the bluff somewhere close around. And I wish I could set out with an adventurous friend and walk the whole course of it until it entered the Colorado. I'll never be satisfied after having been down the Snake River until

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, October 28, 1965

Page 4

I've been a river-runner on at least the Rio Grande and the Big Bend country, and maybe the Buffalo and maybe our own Pedernales!

With me, <sup>"B'rev"</sup>burrow rabbit is in the briar patch, for rides or walks across this country! But I wonder what it must be like for Marie and Vickie and Ashton and Jimilu.

Back at the Ranch after dinner, Marie called me in and I found to my shock that the Peter Hurd portrait had been unpacked and set up to see. I had not intended -- in fact I had told everybody I thought to leave it packed until he came. I hoped that the three of us would look at it together in the best light at the best time. This was an unplanned, inauspicious beginning. And from face to face around the circle I read the message of disappointment. I must confess I did not like the background -- not at all -- too violet. Nor the figure. And the hands were not Lyndon's <sup>gnarled</sup> ~~knurled~~, peasant hands that have so much strength and so much fight in them. But I did like the head. The expression was searching, hopeful -- there was an element of the noble in it. But Lyndon could find nothing good about it. My heart was heavy. This thrust into history looked like it was doomed to failure.

I made a half dozen or so calls. One answering a call from Nellie Connally who is living it up at the GreenHouse -- Neiman Marcus' answer to Main Chance -- and wanted me to come up and join her as she said, "with all the other fat ladies". She said, "If John's got me

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Thursday, October 28, 1965

Page 5

into this business for another four years, I'm going to do some of the things I want to. So here I am, and I've enrolled for a course in art at Laguna Gloria, and I just love it." The fountain of youth bubbles in Nellie. It's wonderful to hear her so gay.